



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

4. — *A Study of Hawthorne.* By GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP. Boston : J. R. Osgood & Co. 1876.

WE remember to have read that in some of the ancient churches on the eastern coast of England a special petition was inserted in their litany against the incursions of the Danes. Mr. Lathrop's book may well lead the next man of genius whom New England produces to pray, "From plague, pestilence, and *intuitional* biographers, good Lord, deliver us." Mr. Hawthorne did what he could, by strongly expressed wishes, and by what Mr. Lathrop describes as "vigilant suppression" of early imperfect compositions, to prevent any such book being written; but in vain! Mr. Lathrop writes from "a consciousness of sympathy with the subject," which he considers "a sort of inspiration," and says, "my guide has been intuition." He claims also a peculiar fitness for his work, founded on the fact that he had never even seen Mr. Hawthorne, and, strong in such armor, writes with a detail wholly opposed to Mr. Hawthorne's shy personal reserve, and an exaggeration utterly repugnant to the delicate sense of proportion which was so marked a characteristic of Mr. Hawthorne's writings.

Mr. Lathrop, having begun his book, has neither hesitation nor relenting; he perpetuates (so far as in him lies) every possible coincidence of publicity (see page 123), every scrap of youthful verse, though he owns to the difficulties he finds in his way, "so successful was Hawthorne in his attempt to exterminate" what Mr. Lathrop is determined to preserve. Not satisfied with thwarting the wishes of Mr. Hawthorne, and defying the "natural piety" which leads us to regard the lightest desire of the dead, Mr. Lathrop elaborates so unmercifully and exaggerates so injuriously, that the reader can hardly refrain from pleading in Mr. Hawthorne's behalf, "Good friend, for Jesus' sake, forbear!"

We regret our inability to praise Mr. Lathrop's method any more than to sympathize with his intention. He tells us that "the history of Hawthorne's genius is in some sense a summary of all New England history" (*sic*); that "when Hawthorne came, his utterance was a culmination of two preceding centuries"; and goes on to point out the likeness between Salem and Florence, apropos (as far as we can see) to the equivalency of Hawthorne and Dante! Certainly, as the excellent Fluellen tells us, "There be rivers in Monmouth, and rivers in Macedon," but it is difficult to find greater similarity be-

tween "the flower-crowned city," where the gifts of climate, of race, and of art made life so beautiful that its boisterous politics and its bloody feuds seemed of small account, and the bleak, maritime, Calvinistic town whose *festas* were witch-trials, and where a theocracy far more effective than any Israelitish ruler's kept its grip unloosed for scores of years. Crabbe has described the sort of rigid quiet that reigned in Salem : —

"It was that which one superior will
Decrees by making all inferior still,
Which bids all murmur, all objection, cease,
And in imperious voice announces — Peace !"

Fundamental granite underlying many good New England qualities, but not much like the turbulent loveliness of Florence !

Mr. Lathrop finds that Hawthorne was a more fortunate mixture of Bunyan and Milton, having "the same positive unrelenting grasp of allegory" as Bunyan, and "the same delight in art for art's sake, that added such a grace to Milton's sinewy and large-limbed port"; and further, that "Bunyan's characters being moods," Milton's "were traits," and that if one were to "pour the *ebullient undulating* prose style of the poet into the allegorist's firm leather-jerkined English," "the result would not be alien to Hawthorne" !

Ebullient undulations in a leather-jerkined style is not a pretty picture ; but we pass on to the description of Salem, where Mr. Lathrop mentions with interest that he has heard that "persons have gone mad from no other cause than inherited insanity," — a singularity manifestly peculiar to Salem, which Dr. Maudsley should note in his next edition. Mr. Hawthorne's ancestry, of a good New England sort, is described with some detail ; the early death of his father, and Hawthorne's removal with his mother to Cumberland County in Maine, where he remained till 1821, when he entered Bowdoin College at the same time with Longfellow. Extracts from a mysterious note-book relating to this time are given by Mr. Lathrop ; but his investigations into their authenticity amount only to this, — that either Hawthorne did write them or he did not ; that if he did, they have a certain interest ; if he did not, they are of no value ; but Mr. Lathrop has not arrived at a conclusion.

Mr. Lathrop notes the remarkable fact that, being blamed while at Bowdoin for the fault of another person, Hawthorne did *not* denounce his classmate ; he tells us the length of Mr. Hawthorne's foot ; he draws youthful verses from their appropriate oblivion ; he tells us that Mr. Hawthorne's inability to distinguish one tune from another was owing "*merely* to the absence of any musical instinct" ;

that his genius had "a pensive perfume," and at the same time "a perfume of surprise," and bids us "be grateful that Hawthorne does not so covet the applause of the clever club-man, or, of the unconscious vulgarian, as to junket about in caravan, carrying the passions with him in gaudy cages and feeding them with raw flesh." Strewing his way with such flowers of style, Mr. Lathrop finally lands his subject "on a plane between Shakespeare and Goethe," and, to borrow the tag of an old story, "There — my lord — I leave you."